

COVID-19 CASE INVESTIGATION OVERVIEW

Use this document to conduct a COVID-19 case investigation. For more information about coronavirus investigations, please refer to the NC CD Manual here: <https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/coronavirus.html>

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, please ensure you are using the most current case definition and following current CDC and NC DPH recommendations. <https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/coronavirus/providers.html> **ALL** investigations should be discussed with the Communicable Disease Branch (CDB).

For additional support, consult the NC Communicable Disease Branch at (919) 733-3419.

TESTING APPROVAL

Testing at SLPH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Testing for COVID-19 at the State Laboratory for Public Health must be approved by the local health department or the state communicable disease branch (CDB) using the NC PUI criteria available here: https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina/testing-covid-19• To approve testing in your county<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Create a record in REDCap for the PUI. You can access REDCap here: https://survey.ncpublichealth.com/.○ Fill out the Demographics form in REDCap.○ In the Status form in REDCap, mark the current case status as 'Person under investigation (PUI) pending test results.'○ Give the provider the REDCap Record ID number to use for specimen submission. The provider should put this number at the top of the PUI and Case Report Form in place of the CDC 2019-nCoV ID. The REDCap Record ID number can be found at the top of the record home page.○ Send the provider the PUI testing email with the following attachments: CDC PUI and Case Report form, home care guidance or congregate living guidance (as appropriate for the patient's living situation), PUI isolation guidance, and the visitor log.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The patient should receive home care guidance or congregate living guidance, PUI isolation guidance, and a visitor log from the provider.▪ These forms are also available here: https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/coronavirus/providers.html○ The provider should complete and send the PUI form to the local health department – this does not need to be entered into REDCap unless the case is positive (see step 4 below).
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AFTER A CASE IS CONFIRMED

1. Review Lab Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure lab criteria meets the case definition
2. Verify County of Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If out of state, update address in the person profile, then assign to the state Disease Registrar as "Does not meet".• CDB will ensure Out of State notifications are sent to the appropriate state.• If resident of another county, reassign to that county in the Administrative Package. Call the NCEDSS Help Desk if assistance is needed with reassignment of the event.
3. Manage the Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upon notification of a confirmed COVID-19 case in your county:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ensure the patient has been notified of their test results by communicating with their provider○ Ensure the patient is isolated either in the hospital or at home○ If at home:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review the Home Care Guidance available at: https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/coronavirus/nonhealthcare.html▪ Conduct a needs assessment as described in the home care guidance prerequisites to ensure the patient can be cared for adequately at home

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the patient that they should isolate until they meet the criteria for discontinuation of isolation, available here: https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/documents/files/covid-19/-NC-COVID-19-Interim-Guidance-for-Discontinuation-of-Home-Isolation-031720-Final.pdf Encourage persons who have had close contact with a confirmed case or a person with respiratory illness to stay home to the extent possible and monitor their symptoms
4. Collect clinical information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out or update the PUI/Case Report form in REDCap Change the Status form in REDCap to 'Presumptive Positive' Update NCEDSS as information becomes available. Enter the NCEDSS ID into the REDCap PUI and Case Report Form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please put "NC" as a prefix to the NCEDSS event ID in REDCap. For example, an NCEDSS event ID of 101865432 would be NC101865432 in REDCap.
5. Identify Source of Exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review potential exposures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to area with sustained transmission Contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 Part of a known cluster of COVID-19
6. Identify Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and notification of close contacts to confirmed cases is not required. Health departments who are able to continue contact investigations and notifications for all cases can do so at their discretion. NC DPH is not requesting documentation of contact investigations, if conducted. If a contact investigation is conducted, complete the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the contact tracing instructions and interview the patient to complete the contact tracing form found at: https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/coronavirus.html Call and interview contacts in your county using the initial contact form available here https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/coronavirus.html Assess risk level using the movement and monitoring guide found here Discuss restricted movement recommendations based on the risk level with CDB Provide appropriate documents for monitoring https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/coronavirus.html
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asymptomatic Contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of close contacts is not required If you choose to conduct a contact investigation, monitor asymptomatic contacts for 14 days after last exposure via active or passive monitoring Ensure all contacts perform self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days following last contact with person confirmed to have COVID-19 infection Advise contacts to notify the local health department if they develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symptomatic Contacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer symptomatic contacts to their healthcare provider for evaluation Instruct suspect cases to call ahead before visiting any healthcare facility so appropriate precautions can be taken Ensure CDB is informed of symptomatic contacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Control Measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See number 3 above for cases and follow guidance under this number (6) for contacts
7. Patient Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the patient is recovering at home maintain close contact to monitor the patient's condition If in the hospital: instruct the Public Health Epidemiologist or other hospital contact to inform you if the patient declines significantly. Inform CDB immediately if the patient declines significantly: 919-733-3419 Work with CDB to determine the appropriate end of isolation after symptoms resolve
8. Special Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when interacting with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients. See the latest CDC recommendations here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html

CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR NCDSS

- Administrative Package
- Demographic Package
- Clinical Package
 - “General Diagnostic Information- Date that best reflects the earliest date of illness identification”
 - Best choice is **always** the date of illness onset (signs and symptoms), 2nd best is date of lab

RISK/PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

- Any suspect or confirmed case of COVID-19 will draw intense media interest. Information on suspected cases should not be released to the media. Continual communication between local, state, and federal health officials will be necessary.
- **Prior** to public notification consult with CDB Epi on Call so messaging is consistent.
- Protect patient confidentiality and carefully consider whether public notification is necessary.
- NC DHHS Public Information Office is available at 818-855-4840 to assist local health departments as needed.

Resources:

- <https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/coronavirus.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>